8: Leach E-S (1938) 1940 MAII Kurd MAII
Rowanduz

The Nomads. In addition to the permanent settled inhabitants of the three areas here discussed there are certain nomadic groups who move seasonally from one area to another and even out of the district altogether. These nomads are again in many respects a distinct cultural group; their economy is based exclusively on pastoralism as opposed to the pastoral-agriculturalism of the settled peoples. The largest of the nomad tribes are the Herki. They are normally resident in Persia near the southernmost end of Lake Urmia. These high altitudes cannot provide sufficient fodder for their herds throughout the year and during the late autumn the bulk of the tribe migrates down the Rowanduz river and spreads out through the foothills (Area B) and the northern fringe of the plains. They return to Persia with the melting of the snows in the late spring. I have no first hand evidence concerning these people and the second hand evidence appears to be both fabulous and contradictory. There is reason to think that their tribal organization at the present time functions more perfectly than that of the settled groups, presumably owing to less government interference. They possess definite grazing rights in certain areas, even in districts nominally under the control of settled groups although in other areas they pay some sort of rental for the right to herd their flocks. Their migration is linked with important trade activities. They bring salt with them from Persia to Iraq, and take back wheat and barley. Salt is disposed of on the Erbil market as well as large numbers of their livestock. The duty-free import of salt is of course strictly illegal but is winked at by the authorities. It was reported in the summer of 1938 that the Persian authorities intended to compel the Herki to adopt a settled habitat. It is thus unlikely that it will ever be possible to determine the precise position of this group in the political and economic organization of the Kurdish area as a whole.

In my field work I stayed nearly all the time in villages occupied by members of the Surav and Baliz tribes (see Map 2).

"The Iraq government authorities are able to carry on all negotiations with the Herki through the agency of a single paramount Agha, this despite the fact that the tribe itself contains into small family groups throughout a very wide area; this seems to imply a high degree of tribal integration. During the summer of 1938 a law case was proceeding between the Agha paramount of the Herki and Ismail Agha of Baliyan [Surav tribe] as to whether the former must pay any rent to the latter for the grazing rights of what appeared to be Herki land. Ismail Agha complained to me bitterly that the Herki seemed likely to win their case owing to their greater wealth and resources for corruption. The case however established the point that they might claim traditional grazing rights in land seemingly within the sphere of influence of permanently settled groups.

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Apart from these two non-tribal villages, all the groups in the Balik and Dergala areas are at least 95% pure Kurdish. The intrusive element is provided by a few Jews and Assyrian Christians who as a rule carry on some special trade such as weaving or carpentry and are thus tolerated as useful members of the community. 583 463

Method of Analysis.

As is clear from what has already been said, the tribal organisation of the various groups throughout the area under review have all to a greater or less degree been affected by contact with, and interference by the external administrative authority. If we go so far as to assume that at one time there was a form of social organisation which could be reported as the typical norm for all the hill tribes of this region, it is certain that such a norm can nowhere now be found functioning in its complete state. Kurdish society as it exists today is a society undergoing extremely rapid and at times violent social change. As we shall see there are powerful and perhaps irresistable forces at work tending not so much to the modification as to the total destruction and disintegration of existing forms of tribal organisation. In such circumstances, in order to make the description intelligible at all, some degree of idealisation seems essential. In the main therefore I shall seek to describe Kurdish society as if it were a functioning whole and then show up existing circumstances as variations from this idealised norm. I am aware that such a method makes the resulting description to some extent subjective and that at many points I have not the empirical data to check the validity of my hypothetical norm. In the circumstances however it appears to be the most reasonable procedure to adopt. 177 21

The External Administration

The precise form of the external administration has so many direct bearing on the Kurdish social system as described in this monograph. But at various points in the argument especially in the section dealing with economic problems reference will have to be made to elements in the administrative organisation, and it seems desirable therefore to give first a brief description of the functions and relationships of the various members of this external organisation. 177 635.

The administrative system of Iraq has been developed out of that of the old Ottoman Empire. The terminology remains in many respects unaltered. The whole of the Kurdish area here under

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635 Kirkuk Liwa within the Province (Liwa) of Erbil. The civil head of the Liwa is Mutasarrif who is directly responsible for the police administration and the supervisory and indirectly for such social services as Health, Education, Agricultural Relief etc. The tax organization is closely associated with the police and also comes under the administration of the Mutasarrif. Outside his control however are the military and the judiciary.

635 871 644 Within the field of any discussion the social services of the government are very limited, though the education system is worthy of note. There are primary and secondary schools at Erbil and a primary school at Rowanduz. There was for a while a secondary school also at Rowanduz but this was closed following a nationalist strike by the students who demanded to be taught in the English language instead of Arabic. The various economic reasons these schools affect only a very small stratum of society - the sons of important Aghas and town merchants. Some of the larger villages have in addition a post government teacher. Though the intention is good, the practice is less so. The wages offered and the facilities for advancement are so poor that only the very poorest type of indolent scholar offers himself for such posts. In the Erbil area anyway the experience of government education has on the whole unfortunate. The current opinion seems to be that all government education officers are moral parasites. The complaint seems to stem the basis for such an attitude. The only schoolmaster among the Erbil of the time of my visit was attached to the village of Dapan. Formerly he had been attached to the village of Bart where he had married one of the Agha's daughters; this lady he had now divorced or rather deserted and the Agha of Bart was suing him in the courts for maintenance. In Dapan he had seduced the daughter of the Erbil and to avoid scandal had not married her, but this in itself was a scandalous proceeding since the Erbil and the schoolmaster are regarded as enemies by nature - (aside from the traditional viewpoint education is the Erbil's chief function). In another case which I investigated more fully later the agricultural adviser of Kalak was murdered.

871 875 609 609 Of the time of my visit the post of Mutasarrif of Erbil was held by Ahmed Beg (Tawfiq Beg, a Kurd from the notoriously nepotistic district of Baiyamari, a man of great intelligence and personal integrity. I am directly indebted to him for the facilities and assistance which enabled me to carry out this piece of field work, the more especially since his own political position at the time was somewhat delicate. Being related by marriage to the chiefs of the Dzabuki tribes, at that time in revolt, he was regarded with a certain amount of suspicion by some of the anti elements in the Baghdad government. This fact, coupled with a mild reputation for being pro-British - by no means a desirable sentiment to advance then, - made my request for travel facilities a doubtful concession. In the circumstances his help was deeply appreciated.

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probably on the instigation of the Agha, because he was held to have corrupted the morals of the youth.

Health services need not concern us. In the area studied there is no resident doctor outside the city of Erbil.

The Government have made various experiments in agricultural reform chiefly with a view to improving the breed of livestock and the quality of valuable crops such as tobacco. The Government's interest in the improvement of the tobacco crop is especially relevant to the area here described. Details will be discussed later but it may be pointed out that Government assistance of this kind is not a philanthropic enterprise. The heavy excise duty levied on all saleable tobacco such more than repays any expense incurred.

The independent judiciary functions through the court in Erbil. In practice however it is in the nature of appeal court, since in the first instance cases come before the Nahiz [sub-district magistrate] and then before the Qa'im Magam [district magistrate] before being referred to the court. I am not clear as to the rules governing "appeal" of this sort, nor as to the limits of sentence that can be imposed by the magistrates' courts. So far as I know, only serious cases such as homicide automatically go before the court at Erbil.

During time of peace the military are stationed only at Erbil and Kemaliya. There appears to be a general attitude of suspicion and conflict as between the civil and the military authorities. In this area the civil service is staffed mainly by Sunnis and Turks and is thus to general inclination Sunni-phil. The army on the other hand is staffed mainly by Iraqi-Arabs whose hatred and fear of the "barbarous Kurd" can be taken for granted.

The Liwa is divided into several districts (Aksam) each presided over by a district magistrate (Qa'im Magam). Area A, Map 1 with which this account is mainly concerned lies wholly within the Aksam of Koysanjaq. The Qa'im Magam is responsible for his district in much the same way as the Mutasarrif is responsible for his Liwa.

The Aksam is here is subdivided into several sub-districts (nahiya) over which presides a Nahiz. The Nahiz holds all records in his nahiya Nahiz - the administrative district is thus more coinciding with the tribal one. Dergala on the other hand is administered from Koysanjaq.

The Nahiz has in his direct control a number of policemen who provide the direct liaison between the tribesmen, authority and the tribe. It is the reality of these police-officials which is the most feature of the system, and which is the real source of